

**REMARKS**

Claims 24-28 remain pending in the present application.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 24-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,226,909 to Evan et al. (“Evan”). The Examiner asserted that Evan discloses a device including a handle (94) and a head (96) having a gripping surface (Fig. 4) and the cross-section of the head is greater than the cross-section of the handle. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 24 recites, inter alia, a device for removing a catheter assembly having a catheter stabilizing device including a tissue ingrowth cuff from a subcutaneous location, wherein the device comprises a handle having a proximal end and a distal end; and a head attached to the distal end of the handle. The head has an external gripping surface. The head is sized for inserting into a lumen of a catheter assembly having a tissue ingrowth cuff for gripping an internal surface of the catheter assembly within the cuff and dislodging the cuff from surrounding tissue. (Emphasis added). Applicant respectfully submits that the novel feature of the device having an external gripping surface is neither disclosed nor suggested by Evan.

Evan discloses an atherectomy device for atheroma in a blood vessel. Referring to Fig. 4, as cited by the Examiner in the Office Action, the device includes a circular cutting blade 92 secured to a distal end of a shank 94. The blade 92 is advanced through a blood vessel to cut and dislodge an atheroma from within the blood vessel. There is no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever of either the cutting blade 92 or the shank 94 having an external gripping surface as claimed in claim 24.

Claims 25-28 depend directly from claim 24, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25-28 are patentable over the cited prior art for the same reasons as set forth with respect to claim 24. For the above reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 25-28 is respectfully requested.

Also in the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 24-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,030,201 to Palestrant ("Palestrant"). The Examiner asserted that Palestrant discloses a device having a plastic handle (26) and a tapered metal head (34, Col. 8, lines 8-20) having an external gripping surface (Figs. 5-6), wherein the external gripping surface of the head is threaded and the cross section of the head is larger than the cross section of the handle (Figs. 2 and 5-6, Col. 8, lines 53-65). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 24 is recited above with respect to Evan. Applicant respectfully submits that the novel feature of the device having an external gripping surface is neither disclosed nor suggested by Palestrant.

Palestrant discloses an expandable atherectomy catheter 20 that is used to remove atheroma or blood clots from a blood vessel 22. The catheter 20 includes a cutting head assembly 34 that includes a plurality of cutting members 36, 38, 40, 42. As shown in Fig. 2, the cutting members 36, 38, 40, 42 are used to cut away a formation 24 that forms within the blood vessel 22. In an alternate embodiment, shown in Fig. 4, a cutting head 34' has cutting members 36', 38', 40', 42' that are rotated for biting into an atheroma to remove it from a blood vessel. There is no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever of either the cutting head 34, 34' or the cutting members 36, 38, 40, 42, 36', 38', 40', 42' having an external gripping surface as claimed in claim 24.


Claims 25-28 depend directly from claim 24, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25-28 are patentable over the cited prior art for the same reasons as set forth with respect to claim 24. For the above reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 24-28 is respectfully requested.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 24-28 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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